

1 A Myra was meticulous. Lori is not.

2 Q Okay.

3 A Lori doesn't ever check my doors. Myra
4 would always check the entire office. All lights would
5 be off. Absolutely, it's night and day.

6 Q Okay. Judge, bear with us just another
7 minute or two if you would have a seat.

8 A I'm sorry.

9 MR. HILL: Yes, ma'am.

10 EXAMINATION

11 BY GRAND JUROR:

12 Q I don't know if it's really appropriate
13 to ask you this at this point, but do you have a
14 personal opinion yourself that you formed as to why you
15 think Judge Bonanno was in your office?

16 A I do. One of two things, or three
17 things, I'll say three. There are three possibilities:
18 Number one, he was looking for material to blackmail me
19 so that I could support him or would support him for
20 Chief Judge. Maybe, maybe not.

21 Number two, he was looking for Tara's
22 journal to help out his friends, Ficarrota, Gaspar
23 Ficarrota, and Judge Alvarez, because there was
24 information I believe about Judge Alvarez in the
25 journal as well. Maybe.

1 Number three, was looking for the journal
2 or other documents that would in any way incriminate
3 him. Number three is the one I've concluded probably
4 the most likely. He has some things he doesn't really
5 want brought forward.

6 FURTHER EXAMINATION

7 BY MR. HILL:

8 Q Well, let's touch on that. You've got
9 some knowledge there. Are we talking history or are we
10 talking currently?

11 A Both.

12 Q Was there -- was there an incident
13 involving, and I really don't know the answer to this,
14 him and a prostitute and a credit card?

15 A That's an allegation going way back.

16 Q Okay. What do you have on your mind that
17 he might be concerned about?

18 A Well, he had an adulterous relationship
19 with one of the clerks, a woman named Joanie Helms.
20 She was assigned to the General Civil Division, the
21 Clerk's office, and he had a long-standing sexual
22 relationship with her. And that relationship broke up
23 late last year.

24 And there -- there's always been a
25 suspicion, because again, the clerks are the ones that

1 take cases in, they're the ones that stamp them and put
2 them in this supposedly blind rotation system. And I
3 don't know if that's blind or not.

4 I've done some investigation myself but,
5 you know, I have to be kind of surreptitious, because
6 when I start asking questions, especially now, you
7 know, bells go off and whistles.

8 There is a way to override that system.
9 There is a way to jury-rig the assignment of cases. Do
10 I think that has occurred in the past in the General
11 Civil Division? We're talking about the big money
12 cases. I don't know. I don't know. I think maybe.

13 I'd certainly like to talk to Joanie
14 Helms under oath and see what she has to say. Recently
15 Judge Bonanno and Joanie, it has been reported, widely
16 talked about in the courthouse, they're back together
17 again. He broke up with her for a while, had a
18 different girl friend in the Clerk's office. Now
19 they're back together again.

20 But don't get the opinion we're all like
21 that, okay. My wife would kill me. I don't have the
22 time, the energy, the inclination, desire, or money to
23 do that sort of thing. And if I had been, believe me,
24 there would be some people talking about it right now
25 because they're looking for something.

1 Q Judge, with your permission --

2 A Yes, sir.

3 Q -- the next time we meet we'd like to go
4 on a field trip and take a look at your office.

5 A Come on down. Open the drawers, look at
6 the files.

7 Q Well, we probably won't go quite that
8 far.

9 A I'll give you a key. Everybody else has
10 one.

11 (Laughter.)

12 Q You mean if we hang around another hour
13 it would be all right?

14 A I'll make sure the lights are off.

15 Q I know you've got a busy schedule, but we
16 will let you know ahead of time as to when we're
17 coming.

18 A That's quite all right.

19 Q I don't think we'd take more than a
20 maximum 15 minutes, probably 10 minutes --

21 A Anytime. Anytime.

22 Q -- if we could do that. Before we excuse
23 him, are there any other questions?

24 GRAND JUROR: I have a question.

25 THE WITNESS: Yes, ma'am.

EXAMINATION

BY GRAND JUROR:

Q Why is it everybody -- everyone has the keys to everybody else's office?

A That's an excellent question, not one that has been answered to my satisfaction. Originally after this event, Judge Alvarez was quick to say, "You can have your own different lock." When I then requested my own different lock, as Judge Gaspar Ficarrotta has had, it was denied without explanation.

Q Okay. Because that's what I was wondering; why is it he's the only one that has a different lock?

A Well, I have my own suspicions on that now.

MR. HILL: Yes, well, but there was a historical reason for that, wasn't there?

A There was one given. Yeah, there was one given. Allegedly, and Gaspar told me this, when the Emilio Ippolito thing, remember they had that group, that constitutional whatever it is, where they didn't recognize our constitutional government; they set up their own, they issued warrants, and some of this other stuff.

Allegedly he was threatened by

1 Mr. Ippolito and his group. And for that reason I know
2 for some period of time he actually had a Sheriff's
3 vehicle parked in front of his house on Davis Island
4 and had supposedly gone to a different lock. I guess
5 the rest of us weren't in danger, but he was. So I
6 don't know.

7 Q So why were you denied a new lock?

8 A I don't know that. I was never given an
9 explanation of why.

10 Q Have you ever inquired about that again?

11 A No. I mean, things are moving too fast.
12 I decided to let that sleeping dog lie. I had enough
13 issues right now. I needed some stability.

14 Q You may need to get you a lock.

15 MR. HILL: Any last questions? You know,
16 Judge, it's -- I don't anticipate it, but it's
17 at least possible that we'll need to talk to you
18 again.

19 THE WITNESS: Anytime.

20 MR. HILL: We sure tied up your day, but
21 I'm grateful.

22 THE WITNESS: All right.

23 MR. HILL: And I appreciate it.

24 THE WITNESS: All right. Good luck,
25 folks.

1 GRAND JUROR: Thank you very much.

2 (The testimony concluded at 4:30 p.m.)

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REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE

STATE OF FLORIDA

COUNTY OF HILLSBOROUGH

I, LYNDA J. MILLS, Registered Merit Reporter, do certify that I was authorized to and did stenographically report the foregoing proceedings, and that the transcript is a true and complete record of my stenographic notes thereof.

I further certify that I am not a relative, employee, attorney, or counsel of any of the parties, nor am I a relative or employee of any of the parties' attorney or counsel connected with the action, nor am I financially interested in the action.

DATED this 13th day of March, 2001.

LYNDA J. MILLS
Registered Merit Reporter

